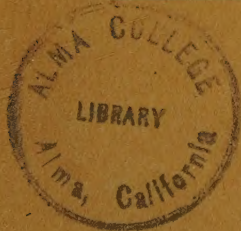


MEMBERSHIP MANUAL

OF

THE METHODIST CHURCH

Prepared under Authorization
of the General Conference



PREPARED BY
LOUIS F. W. LESEMAN

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Membership Manual

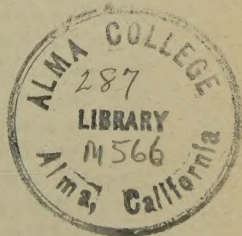
OF

The Methodist Church

PREPARED UNDER THE AUTHORIZATION OF
THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

Revised Edition

PREPARED BY
LOUIS F. W. LESEMAN



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MEMBERSHIP MANUAL
OF
THE METHODIST CHURCH

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FOREWORD

THE Manual here presented has been prepared in pursuance of the action of the General Conference by the Rev. Louis F. W. Lesemann, D.D., Director Chicago Training School and professor in Garrett Biblical Institute.

The Manual makes free use of our Junior Catechism. It also embodies a number of suggestions derived from various other sources. All Scripture quotations follow the American Standard Edition of the Revised Bible.

It is confidently believed that the use of the Manual will establish our young people in the essential truths of Christianity and of Methodism.

The wise leader of the preparatory membership class will, of course, supplement the Manual with his own suggestions and explanations. He will also suggest books for further study and reading. Attention is called to the Manual of Suggestions for Teachers, which has been prepared by the author.

THE SHEMA

(Repeated daily by Jesus and millions of other Jews throughout the centuries)

"Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah: and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates." Deut. 6. 4-9.

AT THE DOOR OF THE CHURCH

THE Methodist Church bids a hearty welcome to Christian youth standing at the door of the Church. From the beginning our Church claimed the children as young citizens of the kingdom of God and as members of God's family. Every child baptized by a Methodist minister is placed on the preparatory membership list, and the pastor's first duty is to nurture and care for these younger members of the Church of God.

In infancy our parents and teachers plan and provide for us. As we grow older and more mature, it becomes our privilege and duty to make decisions for ourselves. We choose our companions, our vocations, our attitudes toward life. We must also decide definitely in youth whether we will truly be Christians, and we should publicly and of our own free will join the Church in full membership.

Your pastor and teacher trust that you are seriously considering this great step and that you are ready to study the vital truths of the Christian religion and the significance of church membership.

This Manual is designed to help you in your preparation for church membership. It is adapted to the needs of all seeking information and guidance regarding the teachings of the Church and the obligations church membership involves. But it has been prepared especially to aid youth in making its decision and preparing for this step.

A boy seeking to become a "tenderfoot" or a "first class" scout studies the Scout Manual diligently, and seeks to carry out its instructions. The earnest study of this Manual of Church Membership and the faithful carrying out of its suggestions, should go far in making you a "first class" Christian and church member.

Welcome, thrice welcome, to those at the door of the church.

PART 1

**GREAT TRUTHS OF THE CHRISTIAN
RELIGION**

1. ABOUT OURSELVES AND RELIGION

In some museums the skeleton of a monkey is placed beside that of a man. The two skeletons look much alike, but there is a world of difference between the living man and living monkeys, or any other animals. Man wears clothes, uses tools, makes discoveries and effects inventions. Man is ever progressing while animals remain largely the same. What makes this difference?

Note also that man has the gift of imagination with which he can build magic worlds as Robert Louis Stevenson did when he wrote *Treasure Island*. Man possesses memory by means of which he can store up all kinds of knowledge. Man has the power of will which enables him to choose between good and evil. Man has the capacity to love or hate. Whence come all these gifts and powers which make us human beings?

A group of gay young girls, laughing and joking, were led almost unaware by their guide into a great and beautiful university chapel. Instantly the chatter ceased and the girls stood in reverent silence. Something within them seemed to respond to an unseen Presence. Science tells us that even in the far dim past all primitive people searched for some superior being or power to aid and comfort them. Throughout all the ages since then, this hunger for the Divine has persisted. May we not say that **this is an expression of religion?**

Let us see what the Bible and the Church tell us about these things.

1. In what respects is man like the lower animals?

Man has a body which lives, grows, and dies, like that of other animals.

2. In what way does man differ from the lower animals?

Man can think and know, speak and plan, choose and love, as does no other animal.

3. What is a simple definition of "man"?

Man is an unseen mind, or self, living in an animal body.

4. In what way is this self, which is sometimes called the soul, superior to the body?

The self or soul lives on forever. It makes possible man's mastery of nature and gives him the capacity for moral character and religion.

5. Why do we say that all human beings are related to one another?

They all have similar experiences, all have the same heavenly Father, and belong to one great family.

6. What does the Bible tell us about man?

The Bible tells us that God created man in his own image.

"God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him" (Genesis 1. 27).

7. What is meant by the "image" of God in man?

Man is like God in his power to think, to choose, and to love.

8. What is religion?

"Religion is the life of God in the soul of man."

9. How does true religion express itself?

True religion expresses itself through reverence, worship, faith, and love toward God, through obedience to his will and the service of our fellow men.

"What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6. 8).

EXERCISE: Read together the 8th Psalm.

2. ABOUT THE WORLD

If some clear night you should watch the heavens, you might discover a beautiful star cluster in the shape of a "Y" called the Pleiades. It looks so small that you might think it could be covered with a coin. You can see only six or seven stars, but a large telescope shows over three thousand stars in that cluster, each of which is a sun, much like our own sun, which lights a whole system of planets. There are many million stars in the universe. How great must be the Creator of them all!

The second chapter of Genesis tells the story of a beautiful garden which God planted and then placed man in it to be the gardener. This earth might be thought of as a great garden which God has given man to develop and to enjoy. His progress in conquering the earth seems to us to have been slow for many centuries, but in time man discovered the use of fire, and later how to utilize iron. Just recently the race has learned the power of steam and electricity. God must have rejoiced when finally Edison produced electric light!

Have we discovered all of the secrets of nature?

The world is an orderly place because every particle of it is controlled by God's laws. The more man learns about these laws the freer he becomes and the more power he has over nature. Man may share with God in the creation of a good and beautiful world. He can create an "American Beauty" out of a wild rose, a garden out of a swamp, luscious fruit from a bitter grape.

In what way, do you think, we might help to improve the world?

Let us study the following questions:

10. How old is the world?

Science claims that it is millions of years old.

11. Who created the world?

God created the world.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1. 1).

"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place
In all generations.

Before the mountains were brought forth,
Or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world,
Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God"
(Psalm 90. 1, 2).

12. What kind of a God must have created it?

A God of infinite power, wisdom and patience, who loves beauty, growth and order.

13. How does God maintain the world?

God maintains the world by his tireless energy and purpose.

"O Jehovah, how manifold are thy works!
In wisdom hast thou made them all:
The earth is full of thy riches" (Psalm 104. 24).

14. Who is the highest being on earth?

Man is the highest being on earth.

15. What is man's duty so far as nature is concerned?

To enjoy God's creation, to obey the laws of nature, to co-operate with God in making all of this universe useful and beautiful.

"For the beauty of the earth,
For the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies—
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise"
The Methodist Hymnal, No. 18 (1935 Edition).

"This is my Father's world,¹
And to my listening ears
All nature sings, and round me rings
The music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world:
I rest me in the thought
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas;
His hand the wonders wrought."
The Methodist Hymnal, No. 72 (1935 Edition).

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3. ABOUT GOD

You have doubtless seen pictures of pagan gods, but have you ever seen a picture of **our God**? Few artists have tried to draw or paint God, for he is a spirit without a body.

A boy once asked his father, "What does God do all day?" What answer would you give him? You might say to him that God keeps everything going. He provides the force of gravity, all energy, all chemical action, all life, all growth. His power and his mind are too great for us to understand. As your mind is present in your body, so God is present in the whole universe.

A little child cannot imagine all that his father thinks, plans, and does, but the child knows whether father is good to him and loves him. Can we not know God in the same simple and beautiful way?

If your friend is in a room in school just ahead of you, you can learn through your friend what kind of a teacher awaits you when you are promoted. Jesus knew and loved God perfectly, and he it is who has told us that **God is our Father who knows our needs and loves us**. If God is like Jesus, can we help loving him?

God hates lies, cruelty, injustice, and all other forms of evil. What a terrible world this would be if he were not the All-Good!

Let us consider the following questions and answers:

16. What does the Bible teach us concerning God?

The Bible teaches that God is our Heavenly Father, the Creator of all things and the giver of every good gift.

17. Where is God?

God is present everywhere.

18. What does God know?

God knows all things, even the thoughts of our hearts.

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart

Be acceptable in thy sight,

O Jehovah, my rock, and my redeemer"

(Psalm 19. 14).

19. What can God do?

God can do whatever in his goodness he wills to do.

20. How long has God lived?

God has lived always, and will live forever.

21. Is there but one God?

There is but one—the living and true God.

22. Is God good?

God is holy, just and good.

23. Does God concern Himself about the well-being of men?

God is ever mindful of the needs of each of us and will at all times direct and sustain us by his spirit.

“Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him” (Matthew 6. 8).

“And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good” (Romans 8. 28).

24. Does God love us?

Yes, God loves us; for “God is Love” (1 John 4. 16).

“We love, because he first loved us” (1 John 4. 19).

25. How has God made himself known to us?

God has made himself known to us in nature, in the Bible, through conscience, and in our hearts.

EXERCISE: Read together or repeat the 23d Psalm.

4. ABOUT CONSCIENCE AND SIN

Your conscience awoke so early in your life that you probably cannot remember when first you knew right from wrong. This sense of right and wrong is a gift of God even more important than the gift of sight or hearing. When questions of conduct come up, conscience says: "Do right! Beware lest you do wrong!" Our ideas of right are influenced by our knowledge and habits, by general customs and the example of others, and in time may change somewhat, but conscience is the supreme voice of duty within us.

Should we always obey our conscience?

We become aware of sin when we disobey our conscience. **Sin is selfishness, disobedience, badness.** Whether an act is sin depends on our intentions. A man might hurt a hundred people by accident and be innocent, but if he should hurt one person purposely, it would be sin. Sin consists in willfully doing what is wrong or in knowingly neglecting what is good. To neglect a helpless baby is as truly sin as to tell a falsehood or to rob a neighbor.

Sin always brings misery. A drunkard ruins his own life, wastes his money, and disgraces his family. It is the same with other forms of sin. They result in measureless woe here and hereafter. Sin infects and poisons the whole human race. God hates sin and its consequences. What has he done in order to thwart sin in the world?

Let us master the following questions and answers:

26. **What is conscience?**

Conscience is the voice within us, which urges us to do right and reproves us for doing wrong.

27. **What significance has conscience for us?**

It is God's voice speaking to us. It is our best guide and the basis of character.

28. **What is sin?**

Sin is any act, word, or purpose by which we knowingly disobey God and conscience and any willful failure to keep his law of love.

"To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4. 17).

29. What are the results of sin?

Sin brings sorrow and pain, and in the end, death to the sinner. Sin almost always hurts and harms others.

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6. 7).

30. What is the worst result of sin?

Sin makes us guilty and evil and separates us from our Heavenly Father.

31. Are all men sinners?

Yes, even the best men and women confess that they have sometimes done wrong.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart:

Try me, and know my thoughts;

And see if there be any wicked way in me,

And lead me in the way everlasting”

(Psalm 139. 23, 24).

32. What has God done to counteract sin in the world?

He sent Jesus into the world to become the Saviour from sin.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God;

And renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence;

And take not thy holy Spirit from me”

(Psalm 51. 10-11).

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3. 16).

5. ABOUT JESUS—HIS LIFE

Jesus spent his boyhood in the straggling village of Nazareth in Galilee. There, among the hills, he grew and learned and did chores for his mother. He doubtless laughed and played just as any other genuine boy does.

He attended the synagogue every Sabbath, and there on other days he learned to read the Scriptures. When he was twelve years old he went with his parents to the Passover feast at Jerusalem. The wonderful Temple and its services stirred his heart, and he was so eager to learn from the great teachers of the law that he forgot all about the time to return home. His parents missed him and searched for him until they finally found him in the Temple. When his mother reproached him, he said: "How is it that ye sought me? knew ye not that I must be in my Father's house?"

In what way was it an advantage to Jesus to grow up in a simple home?

Jesus' experience in the Temple was followed by eighteen years of silence and home life. It is hard for a person who lives with a great vision to do ordinary humble tasks year after year, but such a life taught Jesus obedience, patience and industry, and gave him a great sympathy with common people. He learned the carpenter trade and people called him "the carpenter" (Mark 6. 3). It was, therefore, perfectly natural for Jesus to choose his first disciples from among devout and simple-minded people. A number of his first disciples were fishermen. Why should we be glad that Jesus was once a workman?

At the age of thirty Jesus came to John the Baptist at the Jordan to be baptized of him. John was a great prophet and baptized everyone else without hesitation. But when Jesus asked to be baptized, John said, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?"

What does this indicate regarding the character of the young man Jesus?

Study the following questions:

33. Who was Jesus?

Jesus was the Christ, the promised Saviour of the world.

34. What does the name "Jesus" mean?

The name "Jesus" means "Saviour."

"Thou shalt call his name JESUS; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1. 21).

35. Where was Jesus born?

Jesus was born in a manger in Bethlehem of Judea.

36. What do the Gospels tell us about the character of the boy Jesus?

Jesus was obedient unto his parents and grew "in wisdom and . . . in favor with God and men" (Luke 2. 52).

37. Was Jesus ever tempted?

Yes, Jesus was often tempted, but he never yielded to temptation.

38. When did Jesus begin his public ministry?

Jesus began his public ministry when he was about thirty years of age, after he had been baptized by John the Baptist.

39. How did Jesus begin his ministry?

Jesus began his ministry by preaching the "good news" and calling men to repentance and faith (Mark 1. 14, 15).

40. Whom did Jesus choose as companions during his early ministry?

Peter and Andrew, James and John, and a few other Galileans.

EXERCISE: Read the names of the twelve apostles and see with how many you are familiar (Matthew 10. 2-4).

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor:
He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord"

(Luke 4. 18, 19).

6. ABOUT JESUS—HIS MINISTRY

In the days of Jesus Palestine had no hospitals and there were few physicians. Thousands of men, women, and children suffered from preventable diseases, which were often made worse on account of the crude and cruel notions people had regarding the causes of diseases. Persons having mental trouble were thought of as possessed of devils.

One Sabbath day Jesus spoke in the synagogue at Capernaum and with a word of power healed a poor man "who had an evil spirit." This miracle instantly produced great faith in Jesus as a healer, and, lo, after sunset, when the Sabbath was over, the people brought all kind of sick folk to Jesus. Through his wonderful spirit of sympathy and words of authority, Jesus healed them all. Throughout his entire career **"he went about doing good."**

What influence has Jesus' ministry had on his followers?

In every century since Christ came, noble men and women have devoted themselves to aiding the poor and unfortunate in his spirit. John and Charles Wesley visited the prisoners in Oxford Jail, comforted them and taught them to read. They provided help for their families out of their meager income, and did many other deeds of kindness. Maude Ballington Booth was the Angel of Mercy to the underprivileged in darkest London, and Jane Addams was a mother to the forsaken, sick, and hungry in Halsted Street, Chicago. These and thousands of others who did similar service were inspired to such lives by the example of Jesus. He, however, did not minister to the people solely to aid them, but also because he felt that this was his Father's will. One of his chief joys in service was that thereby he made known to others the loving heart of God.

How may we do similar service?

41. What attracted the multitudes to Jesus?

His noble presence, his kindly spirit, his wonderful teachings, and his mighty works.

"The son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10. 45).

42. In what way did Jesus help the people?

Jesus healed the sick and the lame, cleansed the lepers, made the blind to see and the dumb to speak.

43. Did Jesus ever refuse help to anyone who came to him for aid?

No, Jesus helped everyone who came to him in sickness, sorrow, or distress.

44. What prompted Jesus to do these deeds of mercy?

His compassion with the needy and his eagerness to make known to men the loving attitude of his Heavenly Father.

45. What effect did the example of Jesus have on his followers through all the ages?

It inspired them to serve and to share with others in his name.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father” (John 14. 12).

EXERCISE: Read Luke 4. 16-20.

“At even, ere the sun was set,
The sick, O Lord, around thee lay;
O in what divers pains they met!
O with what joy they went away!”
The Methodist Hymnal, No. 48 (1935 edition).

7. ABOUT JESUS—HIS TEACHINGS

Jesus went from village to village with his disciples. He not only healed the people but he also taught them. How he surprised and stirred men! They hardly knew what to think of him, but soon everybody called him, the "Teacher."

Jesus was the Great Teacher. In his simple, matchless way he made a small mustard seed, a patched coat, or a bit of yeast illustrate the greatest truths of God. He taught one or a thousand with equal earnestness and joy. One noonday, tired and thirsty, Jesus started a conversation with a lone Samaritan woman at a well by asking her for a drink of water. Finally he told her that he was the Christ, and the woman rushed back to tell the people of Sychar about him, and the whole city came out to see and hear him.

Jesus taught not only in words, but by his whole life. Words alone could not express the heart of God; only a living, loving Saviour could do that. He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." His joyous goodness kindled new hopes and desires for a better life in the hearts of men. A rich young ruler fell at his feet, saying, "Good Teacher, what must I do to have eternal life?" Zacchaeus, the publican, gave half of his goods to the poor when Jesus came to him. The companionship of Jesus made great apostles out of lowly fishermen. Jesus lived what he taught and became "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" for all mankind.

How many sayings of Jesus do you know?

Let us study the following questions and answers:

46. What did the people commonly call Jesus?

The people called Jesus, the Teacher.

47. Where did Jesus teach?

Everywhere—in the synagogues, on the streets, by the seaside, and in the desert places.

48. What teaching methods did Jesus employ?

Jesus taught the people through personal conversation, through parables, through sermons, and through his miracles of healing.

- 49. What did Jesus tell the people about little children?**

He said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not: for to such belongeth the kingdom of God" (Mark 10. 14).

- 50. What are some of the important teachings of Jesus?**

Jesus taught that God is our Father; that all men are brothers, and that the soul or self is more important than the body.

- 51. In what two commandments did Jesus sum up all of the laws of God?**

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," and, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matthew 22. 37, 39).

- 52. What did he say about his mission in the world?**

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10. 10).

"The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19. 10).

EXERCISE: Read the beautiful parables in Luke, Chapter 15. See also Mark 4. 1-33, or Matthew 13. 1-53.

8. ABOUT JESUS—HIS DEATH AND TRIUMPH

It seems strange that anyone could have hated Jesus. But he exposed the sham piety of the Jewish leaders and rebuked their oppression of the poor, so they determined to kill him. Alas! Judas, one of Jesus' own disciples, bargained to betray him to these enemies when he was alone. Jesus knew of the plan but went on with his work without flinching. Guided by Judas, an armed guard found Jesus at prayer in a garden at night. They bound him and led him before the high priest, who, upon false testimony, declared him worthy of death. Early the next morning they brought him before Pilate, the Roman governor, who, although he knew Jesus was innocent, reluctantly condemned him to death, for even the crowd of onlookers was shouting, "Crucify him!" Thus, forsaken and rejected, Jesus was made to carry his cross to Calvary and there **they crucified him** between two thieves.

Jesus died praying for his enemies. His body was hurriedly placed in a tomb by friends. All seemed lost. But, behold! on the third morning there was a great change, for **Jesus rose from the dead**, the conqueror of sin and death!

Socrates, a great philosopher, was condemned by the Athenians to drink hemlock, and by his death the philosophy of Socrates was made immortal. Lincoln was a great man, but the assassin's bullet made him a martyr and the idol of America and the world. In a far deeper sense the crucifixion of Jesus threw God's spotlight on the hideousness of sin, **showed the depth of Jesus' love** and consecration, and revealed the forgiving spirit of the Heavenly Father.

Let us study the following questions and answers:

53. Why did his enemies hate Jesus?

They hated Jesus because he reproved their wickedness; they were also jealous of him and disliked his teachings (Matthew 23).

54. In what manner did Jesus come to his death?

Jesus was betrayed by Judas and falsely accused before the high priest.

"He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried."

- 55. What attitude toward his tormentors did Jesus show on the cross?**

Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23. 34).

EXERCISE: Find and write out the Seven Words of Jesus on the cross. (Luke 23. 34, 43; Mark 15. 34; John 19. 26, 27, 28, 30; Luke 23. 46).

- 56. When did Jesus rise from the dead?**

On the third day after his crucifixion, Jesus rose from the dead.

- 57. Was Jesus seen on earth after his resurrection?**

Jesus appeared repeatedly to his disciples during the forty days after his resurrection.

- 58. What great conviction did the resurrection of Jesus impress upon his disciples?**

That Jesus was the divine Christ, the Son of God (John 20. 28).

- 59. Why do we believe that Jesus is divine?**

We believe that Jesus is divine because of his sinless life, his mighty works, his own words, his resurrection, and his endless power to save and uplift mankind.

- 60. What is the final message of Jesus to his disciples, recorded in the Gospel of Matthew?**

"All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations. . . . Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28. 18-20).

9. ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

In Germany the Protestants are called Lutherans because they accept the teachings of Martin Luther. In England the Methodists are called Wesleyans because they are the followers of John and Charles Wesley. It was a great day when the followers of Jesus at Antioch were first called "**Christians**"—followers of the Christ.

The gospel is the glad news that Jesus came to save us all. To those who have learned to love him from childhood, he, like a good parent, is a daily companion, giving courage, joy and strength through the Holy Spirit. Day by day they seek to be guided by his principles of conduct, they develop a Christian conscience, and try to do his will. They ask forgiveness whenever they fail to live up to the law of love. This is **the normal way** of growth in Christian character and the usual pattern of Christian experience.

Those, on the other hand, who forsake Christ and habitually live a sinful life, whether young or old, must come back to him by repentance and faith, turning away from their sin and beginning a new life. Such a change is called **conversion**. Even the most sinful may thus come to God through Christ. They are like travelers who have missed the right road and finally after long detours and many difficulties again find the highway.

What is the advantage of being a Christian from childhood?

The Christian life involves sacred duties toward our fellow men. It means to love them as we love ourselves and to share what we have with them in the spirit of Christ. Our lives, our personalities, our gifts and our possessions come from God and should be used according to his will. This principle of living is called **Christian stewardship**. Some Christians contribute regularly one tenth of their income to the work of God's kingdom. This is called tithing.

Let us study the following questions:

61. What does it mean to be a Christian?

To be a Christian means to love and to trust, to obey and to follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

62. Can a child be a Christian?

Yes, any child that loves and obeys his parents can also love and obey Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

63. What are some of the normal requirements of the Christian life?

Obedience to parents and to conscience, prayer and worship, love of what is good, right habits, the study of Christian truth, and service to others.

64. What does it mean to "repent"?

With true sorrow to see and to forsake our sins and also to turn to God and a better life.

65. What is meant by faith or "believing in the Lord Jesus Christ"?

To believe in the Lord Jesus Christ means to accept him wholeheartedly, and obediently to follow him as our leader, our friend and Saviour.

66. If we repent and believe, what will follow?

God will forgive our sins, cleanse our hearts from evil, and give us his Holy Spirit.

67. What is meant by Christian Stewardship?

The recognition that all we have belongs to God and should be used in a way pleasing to him.

10. ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD

In Tennyson's story of the Knights of King Arthur's Round Table every knight had to be pure, to speak the truth, and to obey the king. The knights were sent out in search of the Holy Grail, which was to be found through deeds of justice, mercy, and self-sacrifice. Jesus' conception of a kingdom of goodness, which he loved to call "the kingdom of God," to some extent resembles the poet's dream of the knights of the Holy Grail. Jesus expected his followers to be pure and true and to promote righteousness and good will among men. The aim of his kingdom is to establish a **Christian brotherhood of love, truth, and justice in all relations of life.** It means each for all and all for each. Such a kingdom makes no distinction between white or black, rich or poor.

Christ's kingdom begins in the individual Christian's heart, but represents many concentric circles, such as the home, the school, the community, the nation, and all humanity. Its largest circle includes both heaven and earth, the present and the future.

We cannot, by ourselves, bring about this kingdom of goodness. It requires the work of the Holy Spirit and the efforts of millions of good men, for it is a world-wide task, involving centuries of struggle and achievement. But we can begin the kingdom of God in our own lives and bring its spirit to those about us. We can do our share in **spreading Christian good will.**

In what particular way can we help to extend Christ's kingdom?

Let us study the following questions and answers:

68. What was one of the favorite expressions of Jesus?

Jesus loved to speak of the "Kingdom of God," or the "Kingdom of Heaven."

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the Gospel" (Mark 1. 15).

69. Where is the Kingdom of God?

The kingdom of God is in the hearts of those who love God and their fellow men.

“The kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17. 21).

70. How may the kingdom of God be described?

It is a kingdom of goodness, unselfishness, love, and service.

71. Where does Jesus describe the citizens of the kingdom of God?

In the Beatitudes.

EXERCISE: Read or repeat the Beatitudes (Matthew 5. 3-12).

72. Why did Jesus call it the Kingdom of God?

Because it is to bring about among men the ways and the will of God, and because it can come only through the work of his Spirit among men.

73. What “Golden Rule” did Jesus ask the citizens of this kingdom to follow?

“Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them” (Matthew 7. 12).

74. What new commandment did Jesus give his followers?

Jesus said, “Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you” (Luke 6. 27, 28).

75. What great prayer did Jesus teach his disciples?

Jesus taught his disciples the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6. 9-13).

76. What commandment did Jesus give regarding the kingdom?

Jesus said, “Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6. 33).

11. ABOUT WORSHIP AND PRAYER

Worship is the opening of our hearts to God in prayer, praise, confession, or meditation. We may worship in the home, at church or wherever we may be, but it requires reverent attention and utter sincerity. We develop our love of song by singing, our love of books by reading, and we grow in spiritual life by worship. Just as our hearts are filled with patriotic feelings when we sing a national hymn, so in true worship the worshipers are lifted together to higher planes of thought and feeling, for the spirit of worship is contagious. Sincere effort to **worship God is the very heart of religion** and is always pleasing to him. Millions of men through the ages have had satisfying worship experiences.

Prayer may be called the soul of worship because in it we offer the desire of our hearts to our Heavenly Father in a humble and expectant spirit. God hears every sincere prayer but he answers it in his own way and as he sees best. Our mothers often interpret our requests for a favor by saying: "No, this is not what you ought to have. You need something else, which I will give you." Some have compared prayer to wireless telegraphy; it is like that, except that God is not far away, but near, like a good friend who is unseen but whose presence we feel. Jesus lived a life of prayer and he urged his followers to pray.

Why is the habit of prayer and church attendance important to us?

77. What is worship?

Worship is lifting our thoughts to God through song, prayer, praise, meditation, or the reading of the Bible.

78. Why do we worship?

We worship in order to glorify God, to acknowledge our dependence upon him, and to become conscious of his helpful presence.

"Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18. 20).

79. What does true worship require?

True worship requires earnest attention, reverence, and a humble expectant spirit.

80. When and where should we worship?

We should worship always in our hearts, daily in the home and regularly at church.

“I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us go unto the house of Jehovah”

(Psalm 122. 1).

81. What is prayer?

Prayer is reverent conversation with God.

82. Why should we pray?

We should pray because God is our Father, and because of our constant need of him.

83. Is it necessary to pray often?

A Christian should pray every day at regular hours and often at other times.

84. Does God answer prayer?

God hears our prayers if we pray in the right spirit. He answers them, though not always in the way we expect.

“They that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint” (Isaiah 40. 31).

Read and use diligently the “Aids to Individual and Congregational Devotion,” in *The Methodist Hymnal*, pages 508 to 519 (1935 Edition).

12. ABOUT THE BIBLE

Great travelers, like David Livingstone and Henry M. Stanley, have written books about the strange lands and people they visited for the guidance of other travelers. The Bible is our Guidebook, written by God's great travelers in the region of faith and truth.

It is a library of sixty-six books. Each shows in its own way the gradual progress of God's revelation of himself to his people from the earliest days until the death of the apostles.

This library, written by devout men under the influence of the Holy Spirit, was gradually collected. Some books of the Old Testament were at first little known, but in time their value became clear to zealous scribes, who copied them, bound them together with other sacred books, and read them to the people on the Sabbath. In much the same way the New Testament was selected and put to use by those who treasured the writings of the apostles and their fellow workers.

The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew, the New Testament in Greek, but Christian scholars have translated the Scriptures into many other languages. William Tyndale was burned at the stake in 1536 for translating the Bible into modern English and for printing it.

Some passages of the Bible are not easy to understand because they come to us from ancient times and were written under circumstances that differ much from our own day, but most of the Bible is simple and speaks directly to the human heart.

The Bible reveals God in the holiest thoughts of the holiest men, and the same Holy Spirit who stirred the hearts of the writers will also kindle the soul of its reverent reader.

How many great passages of the Bible do you know?

Let us study the following questions and answers:

85. Why is the Bible called the "Holy" or the "Sacred" Scriptures?

The Bible is holy, because it contains the Word of God.

86. How was the Bible given to us?

The books of the Bible were written by holy men inspired of God.

87. How is the Bible divided?

The Bible is divided into the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament contains 39 books, and the New Testament 27 books.

88. What is the difference between the Old and the New Testament?

The Old Testament contains the sacred writings of God's chosen people before the coming of Christ, and the New Testament those of his Church after Christ's coming.

89. How are we to regard the Bible?

The Bible is a message and a revelation of God to us.

"Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Timothy 3. 16, 17).

90. What is our duty regarding the Bible?

We should read the Bible daily, commit parts of it to memory, and, above all, obey it.

"Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it" (Luke 11. 28).

EXERCISE: Make a list of ten of your favorite chapters in the Bible. (See pages 58-64.)

Read the 1st Psalm.

13. ABOUT THE CHURCH

When Jesus was on earth, he gathered about him a group of disciples, who went with him on his travels. They assisted him whenever they could, but his main purpose in having them go with him was to train them in the work of his kingdom so that they might be able to carry it on after his death and resurrection. This was the beginning of Christ's Church.

The Church of Christ today is made up of Christian people who are banded together for the purpose of carrying on Christ's work. Its members differ greatly in many ways, but they are bound together by Christian love and a common purpose. The Church baptizes and trains children, it calls upon all men to believe in God and to worship him, it teaches his Word, administers the sacraments, helps the needy, and comforts the sorrowing. Every Christian needs the training, the companionships, the helpfulness and the watchful care of the Church. Each of us should have a "church home."

Loyalty to Christ involves loyalty to the church. It is the duty of all who love the Lord Jesus to join his Church. Temperance societies are organized to promote the temperance cause, literary societies to create a love for literature, scientific societies to advance science. The Church is Christ's society to promote Christianity.

In a free country like the United States there are a number of branches of the Church, called denominations. Some emphasize ritual, like the Protestant Episcopal Church; some doctrine, like the Lutheran Church; some stress certain forms of baptism like the Baptist Church. While these denominations differ in such minor matters, they are all one in their purpose to spread the love of Christ and to promote his kingdom. Even the Roman Catholic Church, with which Protestantism differs at many points, has much in common with the other Christian churches.

What can boys and girls do to promote the work of the Church?

91. Who founded the Church?

Jesus founded the Church by calling and training his disciples.

- 92. When and where did the Christian Church begin its work?**

At Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).

- 93. Who comprise the Church of God on earth?**

The Church of God is composed of Christian believers who are banded together to worship God and to carry on his work.

- 94. What is the special work of the Church?**

To proclaim the gospel, to teach Christian truth, to lead men to the Saviour, and to provide for public worship.

- 95. What other equally important task has the Church?**

The task of the church is to promote the spirit of brotherhood among men, to combat sin and evil in every form, to carry on needed works of mercy and to apply the teachings of Jesus to daily life.

- 96. What is meant by the "Holy Catholic Church" in the Apostles' Creed?**

The one universal Church of Christ, which includes all the separate branches, or denominations, of Christian believers.

- 97. Who is now the Head of the Church?**

Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, and he will always be its true leader (Colossians 1. 18).

- 98. Is it our duty to belong to the Church?**

It is the sacred duty of everyone to be an active member of the Church.

14. ABOUT THE SACRAMENTS

Friendship and love are expressed not only in words but are fixed and sealed by beautiful symbols. Jesus gave his followers two great covenant symbols, or sacraments; namely, baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Baptism is an initiation ceremony. Its purpose is to seal the sacred covenant by which you accept Christ and Christ and his Church accept you. Philip preached the gospel to an earnest Ethiopian on the road to Gaza. This man believed the message, and Philip immediately baptized him (Acts 8. 25-39). That action meant that the gospel was for this man personally, and that he was now received and recognized as a Christian. The Ethiopian on his part was pledged to live a Christian life. No wonder he went on his way rejoicing. Our baptism should mean much the same thing to us.

On the night before his death, at supper, Jesus took bread, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me." Then he passed a cup of wine, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do as often as ye drink it in remembrance of me." The Lord's Supper is, therefore, a loving act in memory of the death of Jesus. It symbolizes a renewal of our covenant to love and serve him. It expresses in a visible form the fact that each of us has a personal share in the Saviour's life and sacrifice. It is to help us realize that he is truly present with us and it is also a token of brotherly love and fellowship among the children of God. **The Communion Service is the most sacred act of worship of the Church.**

With what attitude and purpose should we receive the Communion?

99. What is a sacrament?

A sacrament is a special symbol given us by Christ to aid us in a worship experience and to fix holy purposes in our hearts.

100. How many sacraments are there?

There are two sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

101. What is the symbol of baptism?

Water applied in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

102. What is the spiritual purpose of baptism?

Baptism is to assure us that Christ accepts us in his kingdom; it is also a symbol of the cleansing of the heart.

103. What holy vow, or covenant, do we make at baptism?

We solemnly pledge ourselves to live a Christian life and to keep the commandments of God.

104. What is the significance of infant baptism?

The parents consecrate the child to God and pledge themselves to give it a Christian training.

105. What visible symbols are used at the Lord's Supper?

Bread and wine, used to symbolize the death of Christ for us.

EXERCISE: Read Luke 22. 14-23.

106. What is the special spiritual value of the Lord's Supper?

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper prompts us to repent of our sins, and helps us to feel that Jesus is our personal Saviour and that he is truly present with us (1 Corinthians 11. 23-29).

107. Why is the Lord's Supper called the "Communion Service"?

It is called the Communion Service because it aids and symbolizes our fellowship with God and promotes brotherly love among his children.

PART II

**PERSONAL HELPS REGARDING CHURCH
MEMBERSHIP**

1. ABOUT THE METHODIST CHURCH

Most of us are Methodists for the good and natural reason that we have been brought up in Methodist families. Some are Methodists because their homes are located conveniently near to a Methodist church. There are, however, many people who have joined The Methodist Church because this communion especially appeals to them and most fully meets their needs. This should be true in the case of all young Methodists and for the following reasons:

Methodism has a great history. (See "The Story of Methodism," on pages 53-57.)

Methodism insists on a few great truths and otherwise allows perfect freedom of thought. John Wesley said, "We think and let think."

Methodism proclaims that the gospel is for all men without exception.

Methodism maintains that we may have a joyous Christian experience and know that we are the children of God.

Methodism stresses Christian conduct and Christian service.

Methodism insists that the social, political, and economic life of the world must become Christian.

Methodism seeks to maintain a democratic spirit. It welcomes all sincere seekers for God into its membership, whether rich or poor, educated or ignorant.

Methodism is aggressive in its fight against evil. It is unwilling to compromise with wrong.

Methodism aims to carry the gospel and the spirit of Christian brotherhood to every part of the earth.

The Methodist Church is well organized and is a recognized world-wide force for righteousness.

The Methodist Church honors and seeks to co-operate with other Christian communions. It regards the kingdom of God and the Church Universal of far greater importance than any single denomination.

For what reasons do you choose membership in The Methodist Church:

- 108. When and where was The Methodist Church organized?**

The Methodist Episcopal Church, the original organization of American Methodists, was formed at the Christmas Conference at Baltimore, Maryland, in 1784.

- 109. What forms one of the distinctive teachings of our Church?**

The Methodist Church teaches that every one who will may become a Christian and live a consistent, blameless Christian life.

- 110. What spirit marks our church life?**

The spirit of earnest evangelism, of active practical Christian service, and of democracy and brotherhood.

- 111. What are some of the outstanding features of our church organizations?**

Careful plans to meet the spiritual needs of each member; a great brotherhood of ministers, pledged to go wherever they are sent; watchful care over the purity of life of each worker; thorough supervision of every enterprise of the Church.

- 112. Who are some of the distinctive officers of our Church?**

Bishops, district superintendents, preachers in charge, and local preachers.

- 113. What types of Christian work apart from preaching the gospel does the Church carry on?**

The Church conducts church school for all ages, fosters the religious, social, and recreational life of youth through the Epworth League and other Youth organizations; maintains Christian colleges and other schools for its students; provides hospitals, orphanages, and old people's homes for the needy; does welfare work among the underprivileged; sends missionaries, educators, and physicians to non-Christian lands.

- 115. How is all this accomplished?**

By the voluntary, generous contributions of both money and service on the part of the church members.

2. ABOUT THE MEMBERSHIP VOW

After studying this MANUAL, it is the hope and expectation of your pastor that you are ready to join the Church. This step, if taken in the right spirit, should help you in leading a Christian life, it would definitely enlist your services in carrying on the work of the Church, and it would fulfill the commandment of your Lord Jesus Christ, "Follow me."

No one expects you as a young Christian to understand everything about religion or assumes that you have reached your ideals. But it is necessary for you to be perfectly sincere in your purpose to be a Christian if you desire to join the Church, and the Church must require of you to make a specific confession of your faith and declare your determination to live a Christian life. Just as the marriage of two people who love each other is consummated by the marriage vows and ceremony, so Church membership involves a public acknowledgment of Christian faith and purpose.

When you are received into full membership of the Church, you will be asked three questions:

First question: "Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord, and pledge your allegiance to His Kingdom?"

Answer: "I do."

This answer does not express a wishful willingness sooner or later to become a Christian, but declares that here and now to the best of your knowledge and ability, you affirm that you are a Christian. It means, first of all, that you accept Jesus as your Saviour and through him seek the forgiveness of your sins; second, that you acknowledge him as your Master, just as you acknowledge the right of your father and mother to direct your life and conduct; and, third, this is your public enlistment in Christ's campaign to make this a truly Christian world. "Allegiance to his kingdom" means that you not only accept the Jesus Way of life for yourself, but that you will assist to the best of your ability in carrying out his program in the home, in your community, in the nation, and throughout the world.

Second Question: "Do you receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ?"

Answer: "I do."

This means that you accept the great truths of the gospel revealed to us in the New Testament. The more important of these truths have been discussed in the preceding studies. They are beautifully expressed in the "Confession of Faith," printed on pages 67-68. If any of the teachings of the Church are not clear to you, be sure to ask your pastor or your leader to explain them to you.

Third Question: "Will you be loyal to The Methodist Church, and uphold it by your prayers, your presence, your gifts, and your service?"

Answer: "I will."

This is your pledge of loyalty to the Church. First, it means that you will pray for the Church, its ministers, and members, as well as for its world-wide work; second, that you will contribute systematically toward the support of the Church and the great benevolent causes which it promotes; third, that you will be a regular attendant at church services; fourth, that you will gladly give of your time to such part of the work of the Church as you may be able to do.

Think these obligations over carefully and then decide. May you have it in your heart to answer these questions joyfully and without hesitation and may God's spirit help you to live up to this pledge in order that you may be a happy, useful, and consistent Christian!

3. YOUR DECISION AND CONSECRATION

The following meditation, pledge and form of prayer are designed to aid you in making your decision to enter the Church and to make your Christian vows. Read them over carefully, if possible, each day during the week preceding the Sunday when you are to be received into the Church. It might be well to repeat the prayer aloud.

MY MEDITATION

"I am about to take one of the most important steps of my life—to make a public confession of Christ, and to be received into the Church.

"From a child I have heard of Jesus Christ and enjoyed singing and thinking about him. As I grew older I became more changeable. I was chiefly interested in play and in my companions. Sometimes I hardly listened to what was being said in the church school or at the church service of worship, and often said my prayers without much thought. My mind was full of other things. Then again I turned to the Saviour. He seemed like a friend whom I had neglected.

"During my preparatory training I have thought much about being a Christian. It may be that I am not as good as my parents and friends would have me be. I am far from being what I ought to be and want to be. I do not know as much as I would like to know about the Christian life, but I am sure that with all my heart I want to be a Christian and I believe that our Heavenly Father will help me."

MY PLEDGE

- "I will pray daily in secret.
- "I will always be reverent, and never make light of anything sacred.
- "I will seek to think kindly of everybody.
- "I will try to be unselfish.
- "I will attend public worship faithfully.
- "I will take some part in the services of the church whenever I have an opportunity.
- "I will diligently read my Bible.
- "I will listen to the Spirit of God and to my conscience at all times.
- "I will seek to be honest, kind, and true.
- "I will give liberally toward the work of the Church and other noble causes.
- "I will honor and obey my parents.
- "I will not do doubtful things; but I will wait until I am sure that they are right.
- "I will seek to help my fellow men at all times and live according to the 'Golden Rule.'"

MY CONSECRATION PRAYER

My Heavenly Father, I love thee as my best Friend, and I put my trust in thee. I now consecrate myself to thee. Take me just as I am. Forgive all my sins and the failures of the past. Help me to love the things that Jesus loved; to do the things that he would have me do; and to be the kind of person that he would have me be. Teach me, keep me, use me, Father, day by day, now and forever. Amen.

PART III
IMPORTANT INFORMATION

1. THE STORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

All world events are dated from the birth of Jesus. We say that Rome was founded 753 B. C. ("before Christ"), and that America was discovered 1492 A. D. ("Anno Domini"—"in the year of our Lord"). Jesus is thus recognized by the whole world as the center of all history. This came about because of what Jesus was and did, and also in part because of the Church which has carried on his work for nineteen centuries.

The Church started at Pentecost, when the disciples at

The Early Christians

Jerusalem were filled with the Holy Spirit and joyously began to proclaim that Jesus was risen from the dead and that

he was Lord and Master. The disciples told the gospel story from house to house. They had their evening meals in groups together and gladly shared their possessions, for they were all of one accord.

The unbelieving Jews generally tolerated the Christians, but sometimes they persecuted them. Peter and John were thrown into prison. Later, Stephen, because of his bold preaching, was stoned to death and the church was scattered, but wherever a Christian went, he became a missionary.

The mother church at Jerusalem was made up of Jews. It was hard for these Jewish Christians to feel that men might become Christians without first accepting the Jewish religion. But they yielded to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and accepted Gentiles into the new fellowship. Soon the Gentile Church outnumbered the Jewish Church. In fact, the Church in the Holy Land was never very strong. When the Jews in Palestine rebelled against the Romans, the Christian Jews reluctantly left Jerusalem just before it was besieged, and the Jewish Church was shattered.

The foremost missionary to the Gentiles was **Paul**, who had been the chief persecutor. He was converted on his way to Damascus and became the great apostle to the Gentiles, planting churches throughout Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece.

The Gentile Church, like the Jewish Church, faced diffi-

culties. Many converts slipped back into their old habits; others were attracted to strange teachings. Some thought that the Church was too strict; others, that it was not strict enough. Still the Christians lived much purer and better lives than other people, and before the end of the third century the gospel had been preached from India to the British Isles.

The Gentile Church was also tested by persecution. To turn suspicion away from himself, the Emperor, Nero, (64 A. D.) basely accused the Christians of setting fire to Rome, and many Christians were tortured and put to a cruel death. A Roman emperor prohibited Christianity about 80 A. D., and for more than two hundred years persecutions were common and tens of thousands died a martyr's death. The Church, however, grew in the midst of persecution. At last **the emperor, Constantine the Great, 311 A. D.,** was converted. He claimed to have seen, just before a battle, a vision of a cross with the inscription, "By this Sign Conquer." Thereupon he placed the cross above the Roman standards and forbade the persecution of Christians.

The Church of the apostles was a simple Christian brotherhood, holding its meetings mostly in private homes. In the second century the Christians began to build churches. By the middle of the second century the ministry formed a so-called priesthood, completely separated from the laity. In time the Church had deacons, elders, bishops, archbishops, metropolitans, and patriarchs.

The great city churches influenced and soon controlled the

The Roman Catholic Church

churches of their provinces. Before long the church at Antioch in Syria, Ephesus in Asia Minor, Corinth in Greece, Alexandria in Egypt, and Rome in the West became the great centers of power. **The Church at Rome soon gained pre-eminence.** It had some great men as bishops. It sent out missionaries who in time converted most of Western Europe to Christianity. It sent Augustine to England, Boniface into Germany and Ansgar into Scandinavia. When the Roman Empire fell, the bishop of Rome became the center of power. He called himself the "pope," meaning "papa"—father. In the seventh century Mohammedanism, the strong new reli-

gion of Arabia, swept away more than half of the churches in the East, but did not seriously cripple the churches of the West. The disastrous crusades, undertaken in the name of the Church against the Mohammedans in order to wrest from them the tomb of Christ, exhausted the kings and armies of Europe, but this movement strengthened the power of the Roman popes, who had numerous orders of monks, beside the ordinary priests, to enforce their rule. Constantinople became the seat of the Roman Empire and of the Eastern Church, but its patriarchs never gained so much power as the Roman popes.

Great power ultimately spoiled the popes, and all kinds of abuses and superstitions crept in, until finally the leaders of the Roman Church became thoroughly corrupt, though numerous monks and priests as well as multitudes of people were sincere Christians. After dark centuries, however, a new day began to dawn. America was discovered, the printing press was invented, and "the new learning" came into vogue. The world was ready for a change.

Early in the sixteenth century the pope needed money to complete Saint Peter's Cathedral at Rome. His agents sold indulgences, which the people bought as a license for sin. When John Tetzel began selling these indulgences at Wittenberg, Germany, Martin Luther, an earnest and devout monk who had found peace with God through simple faith, nailed on the church door ninety-five declarations against this and other abuses.

Luther's action started the fierce fight against the pope and against indulgences, image worship, the mass, and the Catholic priesthood. The pope ordered Luther to take back his criticisms or to be put

The Reformation

out of the Church. Luther publicly burned this order. All western Europe was aflame. Several German princes, for political as well as religious reasons, took sides with Luther and other reformers. At the Diet of Worms the emperor, Charles V, and the Catholic prelates insisted that Luther must recant. He refused and so began Protestantism. Luther was not the only reformer. Zwingli in Switzerland, Calvin at Geneva and John Knox in Scotland were other leaders of the Reformation.

Bloody persecutions and wars followed. In Spain the new

faith was stamped out by the terrible Inquisition; in France the Protestant Huguenots were almost crushed by the massacre of the Night of Saint Bartholomew (1572); but in Holland the Protestants bravely withstood the oppressions of Philip II and his cruel general, Alba, who killed eighteen thousand people. In northern Germany, Scandinavia, and Great Britain Protestantism finally held its own after many struggles, ending with the Thirty Years' War in 1648. Religious liberty was bought with a great price!

Even at the time of the Reformation and for more than

Protestant Denominations

one hundred years afterward, the rulers determined the type of religion for their people and

throughout Europe state churches were established, but by and by, **Protestant freedom asserted itself** and progressive, independent denominations sprang up. This was particularly true in England and notably in the United States, where there is no State church. The Presbyterian Church was organized about 1560, the Congregational Church about 1580, the Baptist Church in 1608, and the Methodist movement in England in 1739. Numerous other denominations, many of them with a small membership, sprang up, causing much confusion and controversy, but the present tendency is for the denominations to get closer together, and there is fine co-operation between a number of the larger Protestant denominations. They act together in the peace movement and in the fight against liquor, graft, and political corruption. The denominational leaders, banded together in the Federal Council of Churches and other organizations, eliminate competition wherever possible. This is especially true in missionary work, both in the United States and abroad. **Protestantism is looking forward** to closer and closer union of its various branches. God speed the day!

2. THE STORY OF METHODISM

In the eighteenth century when the religious life of England seemed almost dead, God provided for a wonderful awakening. It started in the heart of **John Wesley**, the father of Methodism.

John Wesley was born June 17, 1703. His father was an earnest minister of the Church of England, and his mother a remarkable and devout woman. Wesley was trained at Oxford University

The Founder

for the ministry of the Church of England. For a time he was his father's assistant, then he became a university instructor. In 1735 Wesley went to Georgia, vainly hoping to convert the Indians. During the long, stormy voyage to America he came in touch with the Moravian Brethren, an earnest and unique religious people. Through their influence Wesley sought peace with God through faith in Christ when he returned to England. The great experience when "**his heart was strangely warmed**" came to him on May 24, 1738. His brother Charles and the famous preacher, George Whitefield, were converted a few days earlier. These gifted men, aglow with their new experience, went like a flame of fire through England, preaching salvation from sin and holiness of life. When they were barred from the churches, they preached in the fields or on the streets to tens of thousands of eager listeners, and multitudes of people were converted.

At first they worked with the Moravians, but soon found it best to start an independent movement. The first "Methodist Society" was organized at Bristol, England, in 1739. Societies multiplied rapidly and Methodism spread to Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and, before long, to America.

A group of Irish Methodists, among them **Barbara Heck** and **Philip Embury**, a local preacher, settled in New York. At the instigation of Barbara Heck, Embury began to preach

Methodism in America

in his own home in 1766. About the same time **Robert Strawbridge**, another Irishman, started a similar work in Maryland. Soon the pioneer preachers were heard along the

entire Atlantic Coast. They were mighty men, filled with zeal. They rode from settlement to settlement, changing circuits every six months. Wesley sent over a number of preachers from England, among them **Francis Asbury**, who became the great leader of pioneer American Methodism.

The Revolutionary War checked the progress of the work for a time, but when the war was over, an independent Methodist Episcopal Church for America was organized with Mr. Wesley's assistance. Wesley ordained Dr. Thomas Coke and sent him to America to launch the organization and to ordain ministers. This was done at the **Christmas Conference in Baltimore, 1784**. Sixty-four circuit riders were present at this conference and a number of them were ordained deacons and elders. It took about twenty years to get the new organization to working smoothly, but in spite of these difficulties, the Methodist circuit riders kept pushing westward with the settlers, and revivals swept the whole country.

In its further rapid development Methodism in America encountered various difficulties and suffered because of serious divisions. In 1828 a group of Methodists formed the Methodist Protestant Church, in order that they might introduce democratic features such as lay representation into their government. In later years the other branches of Methodism adopted similar features, removing the cause of separation and enabling the Methodist Protestant Church heartily to accept the **Plan of Union** finally adopted.

In 1844 the slavery problem and other issues brought about the division of the main body of Methodism into the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. But as early as 1878 the two churches reached terms of amity and in time laid the basis for their reunion.

Finally a **Plan of Union** of the three churches was agreed upon by the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church, and this union was consummated at the Uniting Conference at Kansas City, Missouri. It was a great victory for the Church when on May 10, 1939, the representatives of the three Methodisms solemnly proclaimed the **Declaration of Union** and formed the **Methodist Church**.

Organization

The Methodist Church has developed a great system of government. The supervision of the Church work is in the hands of bishops, district superintendents, and pastors, but all important policies are democratically determined by the General Conferences, the Jurisdictional Conferences, the Annual Conferences, the District Conferences, and the Quarterly Conferences. To these has been added the Judicial Council, which acts as the Supreme Court of the Church.

The General Conference was originally composed exclusively of ministers, but is now made up of delegates, one half of whom are ministers chosen by the ministers, and the other half laymen elected by laymen. It meets once every four years. It is in control of all the affairs of the whole Church and makes its laws.

Jurisdictional Conferences. These Conferences are composed of representatives from the Annual Conferences within certain geographical areas. They meet every four years during the year following the General Conference to administer the work of the Church in their Jurisdictions.

The Annual Conferences, numbering more than one hundred, meet once a year. They bind together the churches of a given territory and look after the interests of both ministers and congregations. Laymen have a voice in this body.

The District Conferences may be held annually if authorized by the Annual Conference. They have the oversight of the work of the churches of the District.

The Quarterly Conference and the Official Board control the work of the local parish. All the officers of the Church, such as the church-school superintendent, the president of the Ladies' Aid Society, the trustees, stewards and others, are members of and are responsible to these bodies. The official law book of the Church is called the **Methodist Discipline**.

The Methodist Church is careful in the selection of its ministers. Every young man entering the ministry is expected to have a deep conviction that he is called of God to preach. He must make thorough preparation for his task and complete a carefully selected course of study. Many Conferences insist that their

The Ministry

preachers finish a college course, and, in addition, be graduated from a theological seminary.

The ministers are appointed to their charges at the Annual Conference and are expected to accept whatever place may be assigned to them. The moral integrity of the ministers deeply concerns the Church, and the character of every Methodist minister is passed upon yearly by the Annual Conference. If, at any time, one of the preachers should do a serious wrong, he may be expelled from the ministry after a fair trial.

The Methodist Church is busy with many types of Christian service. Apart from numerous local charities to which the churches contribute, The Methodist Church carries on

The General Boards

its great enterprises through the following organizations:

1. **The Methodist Publishing House**, which provides the Church with religious literature and publishes our church papers, church-school periodicals, and many books.

2. **The Board of Missions and Church Extension**. Under this Board are three main Divisions.

(a) **Division of Foreign Missions**. It sends out and supports missionaries in foreign lands who preach the gospel and befriend the people. It conducts schools and provides hospitals.

(b) **Division of Home Missions and Church Extension**. This Division renders in our own country a service similar to the Foreign Missions Division. It provides funds to carry on missionary work in needy territory, gives financial aid to struggling churches in erecting houses of worship, directs the workers in difficult places both in city and country, and has the responsibility for Methodist work in Porto Rico, Alaska, and Hawaii.

(c) **Woman's Division of Christian Service**. In this division the women of the church direct and maintain Christian work among women and children at home and abroad, and in the local churches.

3. **The Board of Education** supervises the schools, colleges, and universities of The Methodist Church. It provides literature and guidance for our church schools everywhere. It has charge of young people's work and helps to maintain Wesley Foundations which minister to Methodist students in

colleges and universities. This Board makes loans to needy students, and in many ways promotes Christian education.

4. The Board of Temperance is the agency through which the Church is carrying on its fight against the liquor traffic, gambling, and other forms of vice.

5. The Board of Lay Activities. The purpose of this Board is to promote the financial, educational, social and evangelistic program of the Church, locally and throughout the world.

6. The Board of Hospitals and Homes has the oversight of Methodist institutions such as hospitals, orphanages, and old people's homes.

7. The General Commission on Evangelism is charged with the responsibility of creating an interest in evangelism and promoting all types and phases of evangelism among the ministers and laity.

8. The Board of Pensions aids in providing a comfortable support for retired ministers, their widows and orphans, and other Church workers.

9. The General Commission on World Service and Finance handles the general funds of the Church and makes recommendations regarding the general budget to the General Conference.

Truly, our Church has a great task and "**the world is our parish.**" If we do our duty toward these vast undertakings, we have a real share in the world-wide work of the kingdom of God!

What reasons have we to be proud of our membership in The Methodist Church? What service do you propose to render in your own Church? Can you suggest several ways in which youth could contribute to the world-wide enterprises of the Church? Which church board appeals to you most strongly? Why? Could the Church afford to neglect any one of these undertakings? What attitude should we take toward the work of other denominations?

3. TWO HUNDRED SELECTED BIBLE READINGS

The following lists of Scripture readings have been selected both because of their human interest and their value for the devotional life. They will acquaint you with all parts of the Bible. It would be a splendid plan if you would read a selection every day and check it in your book, attaching the date, until you have read all of these choice passages. Read these Scriptures from your **own Bible and mark** in your Bible all the passages which especially appeal to you. If you will do this, before long you will have a very interesting personal Bible which will become a great help to you throughout the years.

There are many other vital passages in the Bible which are not listed here. May you develop such a taste for the reading of God's Word that you will, before long, read the entire Sacred Book.

OLD TESTAMENT STORIES

The Creation—Genesis 1

The Temptation and the Fall—Genesis 3

"Am I my Brother's Keeper?"—Genesis 4

The Deluge—Genesis 6. 5-8; 7. 1-5; 8. 6-12, 20-22

Abraham's Call—Genesis 12. 1-9

The Sacrifice of Isaac—Genesis 22. 1-19

Betrothal of Rebecca—Genesis 24

Jacob Steals a Blessing—Genesis 27

Jacob's Ladder—Genesis 28. 10-22

Joseph Sold into Slavery—Genesis 37

Joseph Interprets Pharaoh's Dreams—Genesis 41. 1-45

Joseph Recognizes His Brothers—Genesis 42

Joseph Meets Benjamin—Genesis 43

Joseph Tests His Brothers—Genesis 44

Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers—Genesis 45

The Birth and Youth of Moses—Exodus 2. 1-22

The Call of Moses—Exodus 3. 1-17

Crossing the Red Sea—Exodus 14. 5-31
 The Ten Commandments—Exodus 20. 1-17
 The Golden Calf—Exodus 32
 The Spies—Numbers 13. 1, 2, 17-33
 Joshua's Challenge—Joshua 24. 14-22
 Fable of the Bramble—Judges 9. 1-21
 Ruth's Choice—Ruth 1. 6-8
 Call of Samuel—1 Samuel 3. 1-14
 David Anointed—1 Samuel 16. 1-13
 David Kills Goliath—1 Samuel 17. 17-54
 David and Jonathan—1 Samuel 20
 David Spares Saul's Life—1 Samuel 24.
 Saul and the Witch—1 Samuel 28
 Solomon's Choice—1 Kings 3. 4-15
 Solomon's Prayer Dedicating Temple—1 Kings 8. 22-61
 Elijah Under the Juniper Tree—1 Kings 19. 1-18
 Naboth's Vineyard—1 Kings 21
 Naaman's Leprosy Healed—2 Kings 5
 Finding the Book of the Law—2 Kings 22
 A King Burns a Prophet's Roll—Jeremiah 36. 14-26
 Jeremiah in a Muddy Dungeon—Jeremiah 37. 11-38. 13
 Belshazzar's Feast—Daniel 5
 Daniel in the Lion's Den—Daniel 6

FAVORITE PSALMS

Delight in the Law of Jehovah—1
 Man's Dominion—8
 "The Heavens Declare the Glory of God"—19
 The Shepherd's Psalm—23
 Ascending the Holy Hill—24
 Jehovah is My Light—27
 The Storm—29
 Confession and Forgiveness—32
 Oh Taste and See—34
 "Wait Patiently for Him"—37
 Thirsting for God—42-43
 "God Is Our Refuge and Strength"—46
 Prayer for Forgiveness—51
 From Doubt to Faith—73
 Thy Tabernacles—84

The Brevity of Life—90
 In the Secret Place—91
 "Make a Joyful Noise"—100
 God's Loving-kindness—103
 God in Nature—104
 Religious Experiences—107
 The Word of God—119. 1-16
 "I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes"—121
 "I Was Glad When They Said"—122
 God Everywhere—139
 "Praise Ye Jehovah"—150

POETIC PASSAGES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

"If a Man Die, Will He Live Again?"—Job 14
 The Call of Wisdom—Proverbs 2. 1-12
 The Value of Wisdom—Proverbs 3. 13-18
 A Father's Plea—Proverbs 3. 1-12; 6. 20-23
 The Sluggard—Proverbs 6. 6-11; 24. 30-34
 Sources of Happiness—Proverbs 15. 13-20
 Wine—Proverbs 23. 29-35
 A Model Woman—Proverbs 31. 10-31
 "Remember Thy Creator"—Ecclesiastes 12. 1-13

PROPHETIC MESSAGES

Jehovah a God of Righteousness—Amos 3. 1-8; 5. 4-9,
 14, 15
 The Call of Amos—Amos 7. 10-15
 "How Can I Give Thee Up?"—Hosea 11. 1-11
 God Greater Than His Prophet—Jonah 1. 1-4. 11
 The Golden Age of Peace—Micah 4. 1-8
 "He Hath Shown Thee"—Micah 6. 6-8
 Unjust Gains—Habakkuk 2. 4-14
 Israel Offered Pardon—Isaiah 1. 2-20
 Isaiah's Call—Isaiah 6. 1-8
 "Unto Us a Son Is Born"—Isaiah 9. 2-7
 The Prince of Peace—Isaiah 11. 1-9
 "I Will Trust and Will Not Be Afraid"—Isaiah 12
 International Peace—Isaiah 19. 18-25
 Peace Transforms the World—Isaiah 35

Comfort Ye, Comfort Ye—Isaiah 40
 The Suffering Servant—Isaiah 53
 The Gracious Invitation—Isaiah 55
 Jeremiah's Call—Jeremiah 1. 4-10
 The Temple Sermon—Jeremiah 7. 1-15
 "The Harvest Is Past"—Jeremiah 8. 18-9. 6
 Parable of the Tree—Jeremiah 17. 5-11
 The New Covenant—Jeremiah 31. 31-34
 Ezekiel's Call—Ezekiel 1. 26-3. 3
 Personal Responsibility—Ezekiel 18. 20-23
 "Will a Man Rob God?"—Malachi 3. 7-12

STORIES IN THE GOSPELS AND THE ACTS

The Story of the Shepherds—Luke 2. 8-20
 The Magi—Matthew 2. 1-12
 In the Temple—Luke 2. 41-52
 John the Baptist—Mark 1. 1-11
 Jesus Tempted in the Wilderness—Matthew 4. 1-11
 Call of the Four—Mark 1. 16-20
 A Day of Miracles—Mark 1. 21-34
 A Great Catch—Luke 5. 1-11
 A Paralytic Carried by Four—Mark 2. 1-12
 Stilling the Tempest—Mark 4. 35-41
 Raising Jairus' Daughter—Mark 5. 21-43
 The Death of John the Baptist—Mark 6. 14-29
 The Feeding of the Five Thousand—Mark 6. 30-56
 The Transfiguration—Mark 9. 2-8
 The Epileptic Boy—Mark 9. 14-29
 The Visit to Mary and Martha—Luke 10. 38-42
 Jesus Writing in the Sand—John 8. 2-11
 Blessing the Children—Mark 10. 13-16
 The Rich Young Ruler—Mark 10. 17-31
 Zacchaeus—Luke 19. 1-10
 Jesus Anointed—Mark 14. 3-9
 The Triumphal Entry—Luke 19. 29-44
 Cleansing the Temple—Mark 11. 15-19
 The Foot Washing—John 13. 1-20
 Gethsemane—Mark 14. 32-42
 The Betrayal and Arrest—Luke 22. 47-53
 Peter's Denial—Luke 22. 54-62
 Before Pilate—Luke 23. 1-25

The Crucifixion—Luke 23. 26-49
 The Resurrection—John 20. 1-18
 On the Emmaus Road—Luke 24. 13-35
 The Ascension—Acts 1. 6-9
 Pentecost—Acts 2. 1-4
 The Lame Man Healed—Acts 3. 1-10
 Peter's Bold Witness—Acts 4. 5-22
 Stephen's Martyrdom—Acts 6. 8-15; 7. 54-8. 1
 Saul's Conversion—Acts 9. 1-22
 Singing in Prison—Acts 16. 16-40
 The Shipwreck—Acts 27

THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS

IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS (Matthew, Mark, Luke)

The Sermon on the Mount—Matthew 5, 6, 7
 The Beatitudes—Matthew 5. 1-12
 The New Law—Matthew 5. 13-48
 Acceptable Worship—Matthew 6. 1-18
 Freedom From Worry—Matthew 6. 19-34
 Kingdom Rules—Matthew 7
 The Sermon at Nazareth—Luke 4. 16-30
 Come Unto Me—Matthew 11. 25-30
 The Challenge of the Cross—Mark 8. 27-38
 The Commission to the Apostles—Matthew 9. 35-10. 42
 Peter's Keys—Matthew 16. 13-20
 The Church—Matthew 18. 15-20
 The Child in the Midst—Mark 9. 33-42
 Instructions to the Seventy—Luke 10. 1-24
 A Talk on Prayer—Luke 11. 1-13
 Rewards of Discipleship—Mark 10. 23-31
 Servants of All—Mark 10. 35-45
 Tribute to Caesar—Mark 12. 13-17
 The Last Supper—Luke 22. 14-30
 The Great Commission—Matthew 28. 16-20
Parables of Jesus
 The Sower; the Lamp; the Growth of Grain; the Mustard Seed—Mark 4. 1-32
 The Leaven; the Tares; the Hidden Treasure; the Pearl of Great Price; the Dragnet—Matthew 13. 33-50
 Children Playing Funeral and Wedding; the Two Debtors—Luke 7. 31-35, 40-49

- The Good Samaritan Neighbor—Luke 10. 25-37
 The Lost Sheep; the Lost Coin; the Prodigal Son—Luke 15
 The Rich Man and the Beggar—Luke 16. 19-31
 The Pharisee and the Publican—Luke 18. 9-14
 The Unmerciful Servant—Matthew 18. 21-35
 The Laborers in the Vineyard—Matthew 20. 1-16
 The Two Sons; the Cruel Vine Dressers—Matthew 21. 28-41
 The Wedding Feast—Matthew 22. 1-14
 The Wise and Foolish Bridesmaids—Matthew 25. 1-13
 The Talents—Matthew 25. 14-30
 The Last Judgment—Matthew 25. 31-46

IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

- “Ye Must Be Born Anew”—John 3. 1-15
 “God Is a Spirit”—John 4. 6-26
 The Good Shepherd—John 10. 1-18
 Greeks Seeking Jesus—John 12. 20-36
 “Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled”—John 14. 1-27
 “I am the Vine”—John 15. 1-17

SELECT PASSAGES FROM THE EPISTLES AND REVELATION

- Christian Helpfulness—1 Thessalonians 5. 12-22
 Love—1 Corinthians 13
 The Resurrection—1 Corinthians 15
 I Am a Debtor—Romans 1. 14-17
 Triumph of the Spirit—Romans 8
 The Golden Rule Applied—Romans 12
 “I Press on”—Philippians 3. 7-14
 Christian Thinking—Philippians 4. 4-9
 Mastering Circumstances—Philippians 4. 10-20
 Christian Unity—Ephesians 4. 1-16
 Paul’s Prayers—Ephesians 1. 15-23; 3. 14-21
 Do Not Flinch—2 Timothy 1. 6-14
 Heroes of Faith—Hebrews 11. 1, 32-12. 2
 Facing Temptation—James 1. 2-8, 12-18
 The Tongue—James 3
 Christian Hope—1 Peter 1. 3-9
 Faithfulness Amid Persecution—1 Peter 2. 18-25
 Fellowship of Light—1 John 1. 1-7

Children of God—1 John 3. 1-12

"God Is Love"—1 John 4. 7-21

A Beautiful Letter—Revelation 3. 7-13

The New Jerusalem—Revelation 21. 1-22. 5

PART IV
RITUAL AND PRAYERS

1. THE COLLECT

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy holy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE GENERAL CONFESSION

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men, we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against Thy Divine Majesty. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please Thee in newness of life, to the honor and glory of Thy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

2. AFFIRMATIONS OF FAITH

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

We believe in the one God, Maker and Ruler of all things, Father of all men; the source of all goodness and beauty, all truth and love.

We believe in Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, our Teacher, Example, and Redeemer, the Saviour of the world.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, God present with us for guidance, for comfort and for strength.

We believe in the forgiveness of sins, in the life of love and prayer, and in grace equal to every need.

We believe in the Word of God contained in the Old and New Testaments as the sufficient rule both of faith and of practice.

We believe in the Church as the fellowship for worship and for service of all who are united to the living Lord.

We believe in the kingdom of God as the divine rule in human society; and in the brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God.

We believe in the final triumph of righteousness and in the life everlasting. Amen.—*The Methodist Hymnal*, page 512 (1935 Edition).

3. PRAYERS

GRACE BEFORE MEALS

For what we are about to receive, we thank Thee, O Lord, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Be present at our table, Lord.

Be here and everywhere adored.

These creatures bless, and grant that we

May feast in paradise with Thee. Amen.

We thank Thee, Lord, for this food. Bless it to our use and us for Thy service. Amen.

“Father, we thank Thee for the night,
And for the pleasant morning light,
For rest and food and loving care,
And all that makes the world so fair.” Amen

MORNING PRAYERS

Father, keep me all this day,
When at school and when at play;
May I do the thing I ought,
May I hate each evil thought;
Help me love and trust in thee,
Now and through eternity.

Amen.

We thank thee, our Father, for the repose of the night and for the light and freshness of a new morning.

Protect us this day from danger and give us strength in temptation. May we cheerfully serve Thee and obey our parents. Make us thoughtful, kind, and brave for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Prayer Hymns—"When Morning Gilds the Skies."—*The Methodist Hymnal*, No. 31 (1935 Edition).

"Come, O Lord, Like Morning Sunlight."
—*The Methodist Hymnal*, No. 33 (1935 Edition).

EVENING PRAYERS

Our Heavenly Father, we thank thee that thou hast watched over us this day and that we need not fear though now it is night, for thou art ever near us. Forgive any wrong thought, word, or deed with which we may have grieved thee this day. Bless thou our loved ones and grant us all refreshing sleep for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Prayer Hymns—"Now the Day Is Over."—*The Methodist Hymnal*, No. 53 (1935 Edition).

"Lord, When We Have Not Any Light."—*The Methodist Hymnal*, No. 453 (1935 Edition).

4. THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT

Then the Minister shall say to the Persons to be baptized:

Well beloved, who are come hither, desiring to receive holy Baptism, you have heard how the congregation hath prayed that God would assist you to open your hearts to His love and direction, that you may be faithful disciples of our Lord.

Wherefore, for your part, it is needful that in the presence of Almighty God and the hearing of this congregation, you should make known your purpose to **accept** the obligations of this holy Sacrament, by answering the following questions:

Will you faithfully put away from you every known sin, of thought, word, or deed, and accept and confess Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord?

God helping me, I will.

Will you diligently study the Bible as God's Holy Word, and in all things strive to make it the rule of your life?

God helping me, I will.

Having been taught how the Spirit of our Lord separates right from wrong, will you faithfully endeavor to live so as to be pleasing unto Him?

God helping me, I will.

Will you be baptized in this faith?

This is my desire.

Then shall the Minister ask each Person his name, and shall baptize him, saying:

N., I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Here the Minister shall offer an extemporary Prayer.

5. MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

Then shall the Minister address the Children who are candidates and say:

Beloved *Children*, our Lord Jesus, by His Holy Word, hath expressly given to everyone who believes in Him a place in His Kingdom and Church. Before you are admitted into the Church, it becomes my duty to inquire of you as to your purpose of mind and heart:

Do you, each of you, believe in God as your Heavenly Father?

I do.

Do you accept Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour?

I do.

Do you believe in the Bible as God's Holy Word?

I do.

Will you be loyal to The Methodist Church and uphold it by your prayers, your presence, your gifts, and your service?

I will.

Here the Minister may offer an extemporary Prayer.

Then those to be received shall kneel and the Minister laying his hands upon every one of them severally shall say:

I receive you into the Church of Christ and pray God's blessing upon you.

Then shall the Minister, the People, and the Children say:

Our Father, who art in heaven:

Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory. for ever. Amen.

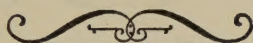
Here those being received shall rise, and then the Minister, addressing the People, shall say:

Brethren, I commend to your love and care *these Persons* whom we this day recognize as *members* of the Church of Christ. What is your mind to *them*?

Then shall the People say:

We rejoice to recognize you as *members* of the Church of Christ, and bid you welcome to all its privileges. Your peace, joy, and welfare are now our own. With you we renew our pledge to God and this Church. The Lord bless thee and keep thee, the Lord make His face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace. Amen.

Certificate of Baptism



THIS CERTIFIES THAT

_____ of

and

Born _____

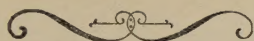
Was baptized in the name of the Father, and of
the Son, and of the Holy Spirit at

On the _____ day of

_____ in the Year of Our Lord,

19____.

Certificate of Membership



THIS CERTIFIES THAT

Having been baptized, and having finished a careful course of study and of training for

Membership in The Methodist Church;

After giving satisfactory answers to the required questions, was received into Full Membership in

the _____
Methodist Church at _____

In the _____ Conference.

_____, 19____.

Pastor in Charge.
